515 are reassured by the fact that they are in a group, so that no one feels
834 singled out by the gaze of the passer-by. Washing away from major streams is always surrounded by more propriety. For this purpose a
[343] small enclosure (ikomba) is built behind the hut or among the banana trees, or a small thicket is allowed to grow there. By this means the native is sheltered from indiscreet glances if he wants to take a
[157] bath or give himself an enema. As a matter of fact these things are done preferably after dark.

834 5) Violent anger or sorrow drown out modesty, just as they
152 momentarily destroy the use of reason and suppress all feelings which are contradictory or simply different. In this situation, too, the man shows himself superior to the woman. He is less impulsive, calmer, less prone to lose control of his actions, to be carried away by his anger. Thus he almost never strips himself bare. The woman, on the other hand, readily strips off all her clothing. This behavior is extremely common; a woman undresses completely whenever she experiences great sorrow or intense anger. Luckily for propriety's sake some friend or relative always hastens to cover at least the essential parts. For a woman who throws off her clothing exposes herself to the mockery and jeers of spectators. (1)

[593]x
[578]

1. An angry woman may also undress to shame her husband; it is a way of insulting and mocking him.

853 6) The Nkundɔ́ practice sexual intercourse only at night. I believe that this custom is due to their sense of propriety, [57] supplemented by a superstitious explanation which will be described in detail in Article V.

593x 7) The sense of modesty has its fullest expression in relation
834 to parents, brothers, sisters, etc. Thus it is unheard of that a son should see his mother naked: bɔ̌na ɛ́tɛ́nɛ́kɛ́ ɛ́sumvɛ́ nvangɔ́. If an adult daughter is ill and requires personal care (such as an enema, for example), the father has to take care of her himself if no other female relative is near by. But their sense of modesty is such that they both shed tears over the event. As a matter of fact this situation

843 bokeka. The same is true if the pregnancy is the result of adultery;
837 the natural father must bear all the consequences of his act. The husband is absolved from them and has no relations with his wife until the end of this particular pregnancy. The culprit must give him a pledge by which he publically recognizes his responsibility, and he is expected to fulfill all the duties of a husband. Therefore he may have relations with the woman during her entire pregnancy without paying additional indemnities. If any accident befalls the mother or the child, he is made to pay a large indemnity.

Note finally that, as we have pointed out in Chapter II,
[583] Article XI, no bride-price payment can be made from the time the pregnancy becomes visible until after the end of the period of seclusion.

843 To facilitate childbirth the previously mentioned concoc-
844 tion of various leaves mixed with kaolin (isaŋ) is continuously ap-
● 757 plied to the abdomen. Medical scarifications on the abdomen are also performed.

Finally, as the time of delivery approaches, special douches
[278] made from a concoction of the bark of the bofmbo tree (1) are

> 1. Certain douches, especially the one made of bofmbo, are also used as abortive agents.

administered. All these treatments are called beté bya bosanjá, that is, medicines (for the purpose) of an easy delivery.

Article III. Birth

844 1. Delivery

A woman remains with her husband for childbirth; she does not go home to her family. Only exceptionally does she give birth elsewhere -- for instance, if she has been sent home for one reason or another, or during a trip, while working in the fields, near a stream, or a spring, etc. Such sudden unexpected deliveries

837 is not morally condoned, and a woman who resorts to it does not
834 escape criticism. She is compared to a goat, who does not have
789 a regular and steady husband: ɓlɔ́mya bɔ́na lontaa, "she nurses her child as a goat does." (1)

1. The opposite of lɔ́mya lontaa, -- if it is used to show the contrast -- is lɔ́mya lontɔ́mbɔ́.

When the separation ceremony is ended, the mother is
846 adorned with all her ornaments and goes out to walk in a procession through the village. The child is carried by an older sister, a niece, etc. He is taken around the village, bánangya bɔ́na l'olɔlɔ́ Small presents are offered him everywhere -- an arrow, a small knife, a hairpin, etc There is no feast, however; if that honor were accorded him he would die of it (for when someone dies, there is always a feast of farewell in his honor). [493]

Article IV. Nursing

During the first few days after birth an infant does not suck
853 the milk of its mother, since it is "too hot." He is fed by a third person, preferably a relative.

On the third day the following occurs:

953 1) The mother's breasts are massaged (-kulola baɓle). For
●757 this purpose the Nkundó use leaves of the bɔ́te creeper and the lilongyá plant (Adenostemma viscosum Forst.), a green leaf from a banana tree called mɛlɛngɛ, several pieces of peeled sugar cane, the tips of the dried leaves of any banana tree, and sometimes other plants are added as well. All the ingredients are crushed, then boiled, and white sand and a bit of red paint are mixed in with them. The mixture is called ndengɔ́. It is prepared by the women who are in charge of massaging the breasts. The bɔ́te leaves, however, must be picked by the father. He goes to the forest early in the morning and first shakes the creeper so that all leaves that are not firmly attached will fall off. Then he climbs it and picks the desired

853 quantity of leaves, which he puts in his little basket called ilámbá.
757 If a leaf falls in the course of this operation, he must stop and throw away all that he has picked up to that point. The massage cannot take place on that day for it would cause the child to die falling and withering like a leaf. The father must start all over again the next day.

There are always two masseuses: one of the husband's kinswoman and one of the wife's. (1) They crush the leaves in

1. The Injóló sometimes permit a man to perform the massage.

[793] the same single mortar (eoka). The mother meanwhile must make her public confession, of which we will speak again in a moment. When the substances intended for rubbing have been prepared, the two masseuses begin their operation, which must be quite painful. The husband's relative takes care of the right breast, the wife's concentrates on [494] the left. (1)

1. This is a natural arrangement for our people; the term used to indicate "husband" (bóme) is undoubtedly etymologically related to the one denoting "the right" (elóme), and there is some likelihood that the same is true for wálí (wife) and ílíli (left).

They energetically massage the breasts from the top to the bottom with the mixture. After a few minutes they test the milk by letting a few drops run out onto a burning fragment of pottery. If the reaction is normal the mother begins to nurse. If on the other hand, the milk curdles and solidifies (baéle báonda) like rubber, it is a sign that it is of bad quality because of the presence of an internal boil in the breast, called ítsí. In that case the knowledge and skill of a woman expert is called upon. The latter rubs the leaves of a creeper between her hands in order to extract

853 the sap, which she then mixes with water. The resulting liquid is
757 oily and foams like soap. She places a few drops on a piece of banana leaf and makes a sachet of it. She holds this against the breast for a certain time until the boil, similar to a blood clot or a piece of liver, leaves the breast and enters the sachet. She then shows it to those present. From then on the mother can nurse her child without fear; her milk has become healthy and normal.

2) The mother's public confession must include the names
837 of all the men with whom she has had carnal relations since the
853 child's conception. Other groups, such as the Injólɔ́, extend this
684 obligation even to instances preceding that moment but which
783 have not been declared at a previous occasion. The confession is public. The masseuse related to the husband begins to crush the leaves to be used in rubbing the breast; as she moves the pestle and says to the mother, "Name a man." The mother replies by giving a name. The masseuse says nyongo, "indemnity." Then all those present say yengô, yengô, yengô, "absolved." Then it is the other masseuse's turn, and she interrogates the mother in the same way. The process continues till all the names have been cited. If [495] the mother cites the name of a man who is a close relative of her husband and who therefore does not need to pay an indemnity, the masseuse does not reply nyongo. In-
[201] stead a member of the husband's clan makes the gesture signifying exemption: he holds the kernel of a palm nut (lolikâ) in his left hand and throws it by means of a small board which he holds in his right. Among the Injólɔ́ the man takes two kernels and strikes them against each other and then throws them away. Were the woman to suppress a name the child would die. If she has no admission to make, she replies, "No one besides my husband."

The indemnity that must be paid by those who are obligated to do so consists of a hen and a bunch of bananas (or their cash value) which are to be given to the masseuses, who will then divide them. Were the accused to refuse, the husband would demand a regular indemnity from him after the end of the seclusion.

[184] The Bombwanja have this confession at the time of the fastening of the fetus. A few old women married into the clan carry out the interrogation. The kernel of the fruit of the palm is thrown by means of a knife.

837 Note, finally, that the confession is restricted to married
783 women. It is never expected of a young unmarried mother. There-
853 fore it would seem to be a practice connected with marriage (a social institution) and not with childbirth (a physiological phenomenon).

This confession is called etato or lotato, from the verb
[192] -tata, "to confess," (for which the generic term, sanga, "to say," is sometimes substituted).

I was unable to find any reason for this practice other than that of avoiding the death of the child. It is evident, however, that this explanation does not exhaust the question, although it is entirely possible that the original and deeper meaning has been lost without leaving any trace in the minds of the present generation. [496]

3) During the entire duration of nursing, the mother must
853 not be separated from her child. For the usual circumstances of
933 daily life, this rule is broadly interpreted; but during sexual relations it is strict, and no exceptions or excuses are permitted. Negligence under these circumstances would inevitably bring about the death of the child by ndota as soon as the mother took it back. This rule holds for legitimate relations as much as for illicit ones. Therefore the mother must always keep her child at her breast.

953 4) If at some point during nursing, the milk no longer flows
in sufficient quantity, the mother is given a potion consisting of
●[157] the extract of the bark of the bolóngé tree (which has a fruit con-
[278] taining a very sweet milky sap). Then she eats vegetables called lotélé. (1)

1. The leaves of this plant are also ordinarily eaten as vegetables, but they are consumed especially by those who possess the modern magical practice known as boyaóli.

5) An accident to which the Nkundó attach great importance
[262] is the rejection or vomiting of milk into the mouth of an adult, even if the person affected is the infant's mother. Such a person